Black Rock City's only alternative newspaper

Piss Clear

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Another year, another Burning Man

adrian's rant

And another issue of *Piss Clear*. Okay, let's get one thing out of the way first, because anyone who hasn't been here before always asks. It is our job—nay, our duty—as Black Rock City's only alternative newspaper, to be sassy, snarky, and silly. But we're also looking out for you. Yes, *you*. And the name of this here humble publication is meant as a constant reminder for you to **drink enough water so that you piss clear.** That is, and always has been, the number one survival tip for the Black Rock Desert. So don't you forget it.

As for other survival tips, we're full of 'em. After all, when *Piss Clear* first launched, way back in 1995, it was originally meant to be an irreverent survival guide. Now in our fourth year on the playa, *Piss Clear* is that and so much more. For instance, this issue is chock full of tips and tricks to help you get the most out of your stay here. We're proud to have the Space Cowgirls with us this year—check out their fashion and beauty tips inside. Dan Bitter returns with his award-winning sex advice column, *Bitter Love*. And, just for something a little different, we scored an interview with someone who came to Burning Man last year and—*gasp!—hated* it! Can you believe it?

Adrian!

Heather Shirkey

We're also proud to feature the triumphant return of our popular Drug Guide for the Playa. This is just the sort of information the *Black Rock Gazette* would *never* print, wanting to spoon-feed you instead with a steady supply of propaganda straight from the BM Powers That Be. After all, they don't want to give you any ideas. But like I said, we're looking out for you.

Speaking of drug use though, there are so many cool things going on this week in Black Rock City, that I'm not so sure I even want to *be* on drugs, at least not the hallucinogenic kind. As if there weren't *enough* trippy things going on out here! And that's the thing—each year I am absolutely blown away by the amount of cool shit that people shlep out here to the desert! It's utterly amazing! I look around in awe at the elaborate theme camps, the beautiful costumes, the immense pieces of artwork, and all I can think is... damn, someone spent a shitload of money! I think a lot of people here are in a much higher income bracket than me.

And that's something no one here ever really talks about, the dirty little secret about Burning Man: it's sort of classist here. There, I said it. Face it, if you're poor, chances are you're not going to make it to Burning Man. And I'm not even talking about the ticket price, which I still think is a deal, even at $100. I'm talking about everything else—the camping gear, the RV rental, the gas, the food, the water. And then, if you don't want to feel like a loser once you're out here, you have buy 500 feet of rebar and 1000 square feet of tarpaulin, along with whatever else you need so you can build your fancy-schmancy theme camp. It all adds up.

And that's not all. Have you noticed how white Black Rock City is? With all this talk about how we're such an open, inclusive community, we're not exactly very ethnically diverse now, are we? What's up with that? Not that I'm making a judgment call here or anything, but call a spade a spade. The demographic here skews mostly toward upper-middle class white folk—essentially, Black Rock City is what is known to real estate brokers as a "nice neighborhood," or at least a "gentrifying area."

Of course, I don't really care, since everyone here is so fucking "cool" anyway. Have you noticed how fucking cool everyone is? Everyone's trying to show everyone else how fucking cool they are, trying to outdo everyone else. How cool.

Look, even *Piss Clear* tries to be cool. We may not have much of a theme camp, and we may not have shlepped a Ryder truck out here filled with the most amazing art you've ever seen, but we try—in our own little way—to take a stab at Black Rock City glory. I mean, come on, a big part of the reason anyone does anything out here is for the attention. Sure, we go on and on about "contributing to the community" and all that, but what it really comes down to is ego-gratification. *Piss Clear* is no different. Like any other theme camp out here, we're just a shameless vanity project gone amuck.

Quite *unlike* any other theme camp though, the *Piss Clear* World Headquarters has no theme—other than "grab a paper and get the hell out!" Or something like that. In fact, just about the only interactive portion to our camp is the fact that you're reading this right now. Woo-hoo. If you want to come visit though, we're located over in the village of Disturbia, on the north side of Black Rock City. Stop by and we'll give you *Piss Clear* stickers. We didn't bring enough last year, so this year we went all out. I want to see *Piss Clear* stickers on every stop sign in this city!

Hopefully, if all goes well, we'll have another issue of *Piss Clear* for you on Saturday. It's slated to be our first-ever Best of Black Rock City issue, and we're looking forward to doing it! Be on the lookout for the Disgruntled Postal Workers, who will be distributing *Piss Clear* throughout the weekend. You can also pick us up at the newspaper rack by the Bulletin Board in Center Camp, and at finer theme camp establishments across the playa.

Until next issue, enjoy!

Random quote

"Does *Piss Clear* have a category for 'What's the strangest thing we've heard from an official?' A few weeks ago, at a meeting with various officials, the sheriff of Pershing County suggested building a fence around the Man, and surrounding it with 150 deputies during the Burn, 'in order to prevent a riot.'"

— Danger Ranger

Playa lingo: The lexicon of Black Rock City

Ductmania
Frantically battening down everything in your camp with a roll of duct tape. *Dude, after that storm, I was overcome with ductmania! Nothing will blow away now!*

Flake factor
The surprisingly consistent percentage of people who talk about their big, exciting art projects for the playa, then never even make it to Burning Man. *Our theme camp was supposed to be much bigger, but I forgot about the flake factor.*

High & Mighty Power Ranger
A Black Rock Ranger gone bad. When a Ranger goes on a power trip. *Geez, Dave used to be cool. But get him in khakis and put a walkie-talkie in his hand, and suddenly he turns into a High & Mighty Power Ranger.*

Keeping up with the Harveys
Slang expression for the feeling that you must make your theme camp bigger and better than last year's. *Burning Man was so high-maintenance for us this year, since we were trying to keep up with the Harveys.*

McGyvering
Fixing just about anything in your camp by using the most random, unrelated items you can find. *A reference from the long-cancelled television show, McGyver. The wind blew down our radio tower, but we McGyvered a new set-up for ourselves using some aluminum foil, fishing line, and chewing gum.*

Playa coma
What happens when the overbearing heat of the playa makes it damn near impossible to even get up, much less walk around. *Central Camp was nearly a ghost town this afternoon. Everyone was in a playa coma.*

Rebarred
When your ankles or shins get scraped with rebar stakes. *Someone stole all the plastic soda bottles off our stakes last night, and I got totally rebarred!*

Sleep guilt
The feeling that if you go to sleep, you'll miss out on something cool. *I'm sorry I'm such a wreck. I had total sleep guilt last night, so I did a few lines of speed.*

Vapor camp
A cool theme camp you heard or read about, but can't seem to actually find. *I was really looking forward to Anti-Burning Man camp last year, but it turned out to just be a vapor camp.*

Zonker
The honorary person in your camp who seems unable to leave his/her lawn chair all weekend. *Dude, don't be a zonker! Let's go!*

— compiled by Hurricane Linda, Lizard Man, Stewart McKenzie, and Adrian Roberts

"It was kind of my vision of hell!"

interview with a BM hater

by ADRIAN ROBERTS

Believe it or not, not everyone who comes out to Black Rock City ends up having the time of their life. In fact, some—even those prepared and ready to discover the joys of Burning Man—return home sullied and disappointed by the whole experience. Take Raquel Cion for instance.

Raquel Cion at a Burning Man party in San Francisco

Now Raquel is not exactly the sort of person one would expect to hate Burning Man. She isn't a right-wing conservative born-again Christian, or a mindless by-the-books corporate drone, or even a boring suburban housewife and mother. No, in fact, she's a vivacious, 29-year-old actress who performs experimental theatre and doesn't like having a day job. Seems like just the sort of person who would completely get off on Burning Man, no? Well... no.

Formerly of San Francisco (she now resides in Brooklyn, New York), Raquel came to Burning Man last year by way of a recommendation from her best friend. While her friend was busy preparing for Burning Man back in San Francisco, Raquel was performing Shakespeare summer stock in Lake Tahoe and eager for a break. Assuring Raquel that she would *love* Burning Man, her friend convinced her to come visit.

Arriving on Friday night, her first impression was not good. "The people at the gate were so rude and awful," she says. And finding her friend in the chaos of a Black Rock City evening proved to be daunting to say the least. Fortunately, a Black Rock Ranger who knew her friend managed to hook the two of them up. "People were very kind to me," admits Raquel. "That night was actually really nice. We wandered around all night, and then went to the hot springs for sunrise, which was very nice and quiet and beautiful."

But that wasn't to remain so. Soon after arriving, Raquel began to feel uncomfortable. "It was like an arty frat party," she says. "*Everybody* was fucked up. There were a lot of drugs happening, and it was off-puting. For the majority of the people I met—from lots of places, from lots of camps—Burning Man was just an excuse to be weird and get fucked up.

"Not that there's anything wrong with that," she clarifies. "It's just not what I wanted to be around. I mean, I didn't go to Burning Man to get fucked up. I went there to be with my friend, and to see creative stuff."

And while there was certainly creative stuff to be seen, not much of it impressed Raquel. "There was nothing really mind-blowing to me," she claims. Nothing? She thinks about it. "Well, I really liked the Bindlestiff Circus. But there was *lot* of really bad performance. I'm sorry, maybe I'm a snot, but I like skill."

Okay, admittedly, not every performance at Burning Man is brilliant, but what about all the art? "I appreciated the things that were there," she says. "But it felt very, 'Look at this cool thing that I did!' Everyone there was 'so cool.' It felt like a big clique, like being in high school again! It's geekiness to me, not coolness."

That said, it becomes obvious that Raquel was largely unimpressed by the denizens of Black Rock City. "Oh, the names!" she exclaims. "Like, 'Hi, I'm Cyber Satan,' and 'Oh, I'm Dr. Woo-Woo-Caca-Poo.' *Whatever!* I think a lot of these people spend most their time behind a computer, and then are like, 'I'm going to go to Burning Man to be wildly creative and kooky!'"

"It's just not my way of expressing myself," she says. "It kind of tripped me. There I was at Burning Man, where everyone is a participant, there's room for everyone... yet, there was no room for me. I felt like I did not fit in."

Raquel admits that the people she met were friendly—just sometimes a bit *too* friendly. "I'd meet people, and it was like I'd been their best friend for years," she explains, incredulous. "I'm a very open person, especially with weird, physical, theatrical stuff. But I just don't give myself that easily."

"And it was such a sluttish scene," she continues. "At least the people *I* met. It felt like it was an opportunity for geeky people to watch other people get naked. It felt very heterosexual. That's why I loved seeing the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, because it was like, 'Yeah! People who live the life!' Not people who are, 'Yeah, I have this gillion-dollar-paying job, but now I'm fucking cool and freakish!'"

After this particular rant, Raquel becomes a bit self-conscious. "I feel so bourgeois or something!" she laughs. "But it just grossed me out being there! The whole place stank. It was drunken and dirty, with the piss and the poo, and there were so many people, and it was loud! I hated it! To me, it was kind of my vision of hell! And then I got sick..."

Despite drinking the copious amounts of water that the harsh desert climate requires, Raquel still ended up dehydrated. "It was bizarre," she says, "Because I drank more water there than anyone I knew. There I was, the only person *not* fucked up on drugs, and I got sick! I ended up spending a lot of time at the medical tent, in tears. Because I was like, 'What the hell is wrong with me that I'm not loving this?'"

Still, Raquel played along for a while. "I felt very, 'Okay, pretend you're into it.' And I wanted to respect the people that *were* into it. I totally understand why people love Burning Man. Like, there was this French film crew there that I loved! And they were like, 'It's really liberating to be here, something like this could never happen in Europe, it's wonderful to be a man and wear a skirt.' And all that stuff is really beautiful."

But for Raquel, is just wasn't enough. "I don't know," she shrugs. "I've lived in cities most of my life. I don't want to go to the desert to build a city. I want to go to the desert to be in the desert—and to make art, yeah, cool. There's a lot of creativity, sure—but it doesn't feel revolutionary. It feels a little contrived. Ultimately, it's just an excuse to party."

"It was like an arty frat party. There were a lot of drugs happening, and it was off-puting. For the majority of the people I met, Burning Man was just an excuse to be weird and get fucked up."

8 little Burning Man pleasures

by HURRICANE LINDA

Eating or drinking anything containing ice.

Picking playa boogers out of your nose.

Putting sunblock on those delicate, less frequently exposed areas.

Having dirty fingernails in a place where everyone else has them too.

Food — who cares?

Not a television in sight.

Being able to write "Wash Me" on any car you come across.

Knowing that the phone won't ring in the middle of something interesting.

I remember when...

... I could stand in the middle of camp and talk to everyone without yelling.

... it took the whole city to raise the Man.

... all the Black Rock Rangers had guns and you felt safe.

... you could assume that nobody would do anything stupid, instead of assuming that no matter how stupid something is, somebody will do it.

... nobody even knew we were using the hot springs.

... Spike the dog fell in the Fly Hot Springs and died.

... we went to Burning Man to escape the city.

... the largest sound system on the playa was our boom box.

.. there was only one radio station, and it operated out of the back of a moving truck.

.. to get to Burning Man we had to carry the school bus twenty miles through four feet of snow.

... there was no Burning Man web site.

... there were no television crews at Burning Man.

— compiled by Danger Ranger, Lisa Hoffman, Lizard Man, PF, and Swirly Rat Jr.

Things we'd like to see next year at Burning Man

Burning Elvis

de-rhythmizer devices guaranteed to throw even the most talented drum circles off beat

a nighttime driving range with glow-in-the-dark golf balls

Fly Hot Springs

hot dog carts

the Black Rock City Super Mall

monster trucks

daily press conferences

a public transportation system

a thundering herd of Samauri horsemen terrorizing spectators

a video arcade

Y2K Camp

— compiled by Gxeoxchi, Perry Lane, Charles Lucas, and Adrian Roberts

Top ten albums for the Black Rock Desert

Steve Roach — *On This Planet*

Duke Ellington — *The Small Groups 36-41*

anything by Scanner

Muslimgauze — *Farouk Engineer*

Muslimgauze — *Salaam Alekum, Bastard*

anything by The Orb

Zoviet France — *Collusion*

Yo-Yo Ma — *Soul of the Tango*

John Carpenter — *Escape from New York* soundtrack

SPK — *Leichenschrei*

— list by Gxeoxchi

the return of the DRUG GUIDE FOR THE PLAYA

It's been two years since *Piss Clear* published a drug guide for the playa, and given our increased knowledge on the subject, we felt it was time to revisit. Since our first drug guide, we've performed more extensive field testing, all in an effort to provide you, our dear readers, with the sort of information we know you require. Of course, the Burning Man Project organizers would rather you not have this information, stating explicitly in the Survival Guide: "Individuals take drugs to alter their consciousness, but the consciousness of Black Rock City is already altered—it is an environment filled with bizarre creative visions. Perhaps the best response is a creative one."

Yeah, right. Like *that's* a useful survival tip. We here at *Piss Clear know* better. Chances are, you're looking forward to altering your consciousness *that* much more. And if you are, you better know what you're in for. That's why we're proud to bring you this revised, updated drug guide for the playa.

ACID

Lysergic acid diethylamide has the advantage of not directly dehydrating you, but it may cause you to forget to drink water. The main disadvantage of LSD is that it makes it very difficult to separate reality from fantasy, and both the reality *and* the fantasy of Burning Man can be terrifying, leading to what is known as a "bad trip."

Adrian Roberts

Lizard Man!

Should you feel you're having a "bad trip," surround yourself with trustworthy persons, and try to replace exciting or disturbing stimuli with gentle music. By all means, avoid the Aesthetic Meat Foundation, or just about any other camp in Disturbia. Remember, it's only a drug, and it will all wear off eventually. *(Lizard Man)*

If you take acid on the playa, be sure you're comfortable with random explosions and fire. Here's a cautionary tale: back in '93, the year of the big, post-Burn dust storm, sudden 50 mph winds reduced sight to zero-visibility. I struggled back to my tent, and found that I had a panicked, shelter-seeking visitor, high on acid. He wanted to know if he was in Hell, and I assured him that he was just in a cheap nylon tent. I managed to talk him down somewhat, and, after the storm subsided, he wandered off. The next day I found his bag in my tent, which contained a camera, a Swiss Army knife, film, and assorted other valuables. Every year I put an ad up on the message board, trying to return this guy's stuff. I still think of that poor bastard whenever I open up a bottle of wine with his knife. *(Malderor)*

Plan your journey well. Just don't drop six in the middle of the day. *(Gxeoxchi)*

ALCOHOL

A staple, due to its ease of acquisition. Forget about those fancy microbrews and just redneck it with several 30-packs of cheap, industrial beer-water. Plus, cheap brewskis come in cans, which are much easier to dispose of. Or pour into a cup and add a glowstick, for that cool nighttime sacred elixir effect. *(Gxeoxchi)*

Alcohol certainly helps you piss clear, and is my preferred substance on the playa. I advocate Chihuahua, as it's cheap as hell and goes down well on a blistering day. And, as a Mexican beer, it's got a lot of water with only a marginal alcohol percentage, which aids in thwarting dehydration. Alcohol also helps one sleep through the nighttime noise. *(Malderor)*

Drink at least one glass of water with each cocktail you consume. Don't get dehydrated! *(Sister Dana)*

CAFFEINE

What did we do before there was an espresso bar in Black Rock City? Caffeine is not only recommended for the weekend, it's *required*. First thing in the morning, after pouring cold water over my privates, fixing the tarp that was blown down by the wind, and attending to my bladder, I go get coffee. This year I brought Nestle canned coffees. They're better than you think. Caffeine, in any form, is absolutely necessary for staying awake while you recuperate under your tarp from that long walk to the café. *(PF)*

You just got to sleep an hour a go. Now it's daylight already. It's bright. It's *hot*. You're awake. Let's face it: there's no way in hell you're sneaking in any more Z's. It's time for a morning pick-me-up. You need caffeine. Or, if you're like me, caffeine mixed with phenylalanine, a "smart drug" which helps you produce noradrenaline, the brain's version of adrenaline. To get this particular concoction, I use Fast Blast™, a powdered drink mix available from Smart Products in San Francisco. Think of it as turbo-charged Kool-Aid™. The advantage of Fast Blast™ is that it doesn't dehydrate you the way a cup of joe does, plus it's a longer lasting energy boost. *(Adrian Roberts)*

COCAINE

I'm going to go out on a limb here and say that coke is a great Burning Man substance. Being fairly short-lasting, it doesn't keep you up for days. This comes in handy when you finally decide you need some sleep. A big advantage of coke over speed is that you *can* get *some* rest, as opposed to lying there thinking how loud the camp next to you is. *(Malderor)*

Kind of a stigmatized as a yuppie drug, but then again, there *are* a lot of yuppies out here. It's just hard to tell, since most of them are naked. *(Adrian Roberts)*

Damn those sudden wind storms! *(Mike Connor)*

ECSTACY

Piss Clear's favorite drug for the playa, which you can probably tell by all the column inches we've devoted to it. It's best if done with friends, for that classic "Burning Man bonding experience." Just make sure you're near a porta-potty when you first come on, and don't forget to drink a shitload of water! Random anecdote: The first year I was here, back in '93, I X'ed on Sunday night. Right after the Man burned, a furious storm whipped up out of nowhere. We raced back to our camp, hoping that we had secured everything down. It being my first playa storm, the whole scene should have scared the shit out of me. Instead, due to the Ecstacy, I was overwhelmed with this reassuring sense of well-being, thinking, "Everything's going to be *okay!*" Once we found our camp in the darkness, I quickly hopped into my tent, which was flapping loudly in the wind. There, still feeling like everything was going to be *okay*, I decided to change into a cuter outfit for the storm. I re-emerged, helped my friends torch our soon-to-be-blown-away shade structure, and laughed hysterically. And you know what? Everything was *okay*. *(Adrian Roberts)*

Ecstasy, some say, is the perfect playa drug, guaranteed to mellow out even the most sour of spectators and get even backwards-baseball-cap-wearing frat boys into the groove. But is E a quick route to a moving, beautiful, intimate, communal experience? Or just a shortcut to finding yourself at the bottom of a pile of anonymous, blissed-out bodies? Do you really want to spend an evening rolling around on people who won't remember your name tomorrow? Nevertheless, if you're determined to drop some E, here the phrases you need to memorize: "Can I touch you?" and "I love you guys!" *(Joyce Slaton)*

I have too many good experiences on Ecstacy to recount. My favorites are a 20-person E-fueled group hug in front of the Man three years ago, and being on the giant swing built by the New York Camp circa 1996. I have had bad experiences on E though. Two years ago, a group of friends and I wandered X-ing to the ill-fated camp that built the giant Mousetrap. We got there just in time to see three people get torched by some idiot who was shooting non-dairy creamer into the air and lighting it on fire. It was full-on gore and screaming. Needless to say, none of us felt particularly high after that. *(Desert Spice)*

If you buy Ecstacy out here, make sure that it comes from a reliable source. There's an extremely good chance that what you're buying may not actually be Ecstacy. Two years ago, I purchased some E in the desert from a friendly guy on a bicycle—aren't all drug dealers on the playa friendly? The letter 'E' was actually stamped onto the tablets—that should have been my first clue. Fortunately, we didn't actually ingest the stuff in the desert. However, we dosed the following weekend in the comfort of my San Francisco apartment, and spent eight uncomfortable hours oscillating between intensely regretting the purchase, and considering calling 911. *(PF)*

Love at first sight — of anything that moves. *(Mike Connor)*

Marc Geller

Can you tell who's on drugs in this picture?

CRYSTAL METH

Crystal can be really fantastic, but it can make you really paranoid for the next couple of days. Very useful in helping you dance all night, or just allowing you to wander around and see all the nighttime activity. Very bad if you're in an RV with a lot of good friends who are tweaked and irritable. Best used if you can find some Valium to mellow out the comedown. Random anecdote: In '92, the first year I came out here, we brought a lot of speed. One night, not wanting to deal with it in our windswept tents, we decided to drive out onto the playa for a little distance, and cut it up in the car. There I was, sitting in the driver's seat, cutting out lines in a frying pan, when this car starts driving past us in the distance. It gets a few hundred yards away, and suddenly veers straight for us, and we can see that it's a law enforcement agency truck. In a panic, I set the frying pan at my feet, and ended up having a very jittery conversation with a very polite police officer. He thought we were stuck, and he had come out to help. We babbled back at him at great velocity, assuring him that we were fine, all was well, isn't it a lovely night, and how did he like his job? He never looked at my feet. *(Malderor)*

I like doing speed on the playa, because, A) it makes me feel *so* naughty, and B) staying up all night suddenly becomes possible for a slug-a-bed like me. Watching the sun rise after sitting around the campfire all night with friends is a good memory of this drug. One year however, I travelled by RV with a crew of people who brought tons of speed. It was a nightmare, because by Day Two, everyone was cranky as fuck. Tweakers need a wide berth. They also need a little self-awareness. Remember that the next time you've been up for three days. *(Desert Spice)*

Not sleeping during the day because it's too hot + not sleeping at night because there's too much cool stuff going on = the surprising usefulness of crystal meth out on the playa. Speed is not the sort of drug you think of when you think Burning Man—hallucinogenics usually come to mind—but believe it or not, it actually works really well out here. The important thing to keep in mind though, is that you don't want to tweak too hard. Do *just enough* to keep you going, but not so much that you're actually high. Small doses are the key here. Trust us, no one wants to listen to your incessant babbling about how cool everything is. We know already. *(Adrian Roberts)*

Crystal meth is for brat ravers and will give you a bitch of a hangover if mixed with booze or whatever. *(Gxeoxchi)*

Great for gate shifts and garbage detail. *(Mike Connor)*

HEROIN

Heroin? Yaa... right. Only pathetic white bread suburbanites who want to be "on the edge" need this crap. *(Gxeoxchi)*

KETAMINE

Special K—it's not just for breakfast anymore! Not bad for the playa, adding a bit of short-lived color to your evening. However, too much will send you spiraling down into a K-hole, which won't kill you, but *will* freak out anyone who sees your sorry ass suddenly go catatonic in the middle of the playa. Just to be sure, take a "babysitter," er, I mean, "trusted friend" along with you—someone who is *not* on ketamine also. But if you fuck up and slip into a K-hole, you're going to owe them big time. *(Adrian Roberts)*

MARIJUANA

Pot is so ubiquitous out here, I'm not even sure we need to say much about it. Just watch out for that stereotypical "paranoid delusion" thing, which only gets amplified at night. *(Adrian Roberts)*

The good herb is my personal fave, on and off the playa. Being at BM is enough of an intoxicant, thus just a few draughts on a doobie is enough to make you feel Nebulan. Be prepared to pay up though, as the suppliers here naturally drive up the prices. Usually, it's worth it. Last year I got these purple-ish buds from some kind folks from Seattle — mind-bending indeed and worth it... $80 per quarter-ounce. *(Gxeoxchi)*

My favorite playa drug. It has a soothing effect in the heat, and it's almost as social a drug as alcohol. It also comes in handy when you're coming down off of speed or Ecstacy. I recommend it most highly. *(Desert Spice)*

MESCALINE

Mescaline is desirable, although not readily available. Should you chance upon it, by all means get'cha some. Mescaline is not quite as intense as mushrooms as far as that whacked-out feeling of something vibrating internally goes, but it retains a more subdued, pleasant, and—dare I say—controllable trip. In other words, you won't laugh hysterically at just anything. It's more like simple giddiness and chuckles—you feel more in control. *(Gxeoxchi)*

Mesc always makes my tummy go all topsy-turvy, so I'm not sure I can recommend it for the playa. However, if you're looking for that "first hour on mushrooms while it's still fun, before the universe caves in on you" feeling, then this might be what you're looking for. *(Adrian Roberts)*

MUSHROOMS

With so much cool stuff going on at Burning Man, the last thing I want to do is a drug that turns me inward and sends me off into my own little personal headtrip. Not that shrooms are bad to do out on the playa! It's just that if you want to take part in the intense socializing that goes on during a typical Black Rock City evening, find something else. However, if you came here looking for some sort of mystical desert experience, then shrooms will definitely drop-kick you into that mindspace. Just make sure you're someplace safe and cozy. *(Adrian Roberts)*

Shrooms are wonderful, thanks to the all natural ingredients. Really lets you get in tune with the landscape. *(Gxeoxchi)*

Ought to come free with entrance ticket. *(Mike Connor)*

haiku

by MICHAEL ZELNER

Don't believe Larry
The Man is getting smaller
See for yourself

Glad I used sunscreen
SPF 90 worked well
Heck, my lips are chapped

Where are my car keys?
If I had pockets I'd know
That's the naked truth

How come they didn't
Have the Man crush
tents and stuff
Like in *Godzilla*

Hey, your hair's on fire
Is that a performance piece
Or should I get help?

At the port-o-sans
Ponder the meaning of life
The line moves slowly

There are Nebulons
Probing me for useful facts
But I know nothing

Did you hear who died?
Bob Hope in a big car crash
Just kidding, but no,

WHAT'S OUT	WHAT'S IN
absinthe	water
"Atta Ishtar"	"Om namai Rudra"
Barney	Teletubbies
bicycles	feet
Bleu Light District	Disturbia
Café Temps Perdu	Bianca's Smut Shack
cash for beer/drugs	wampum for beer/drugs
Clif Bars™	Clif Jism™
cosmopolitans	water
Danger Ranger's hair	Danger Ranger's bald head
domain names	snail mail addresses
dosing your friends	dosing the cops
Elvis impersonators	Larry Harvey impersonators
fashion shows	fashion police
Fly Hot Springs	solar showers
Frontier Store	bringing all your own shit
gate crashing	paying for a ticket
having a theme camp	just showing up
Hualapai Playa	Black Rock Desert
laser pointers	flamethrowers
leather bondage gear	custom polyvinyl chloride
Main Stage	building your own stage
outer space	inner space
Pedal Camp	fixing your own damn bike!
ripping on Christians	ripping on goths
Safeway	Trader Joe's
"Show us yer tits!"	showing your tits
teen virgins	small children
tents	RVs
Washoe County cops	Black Rock Rangers

— list compiled by Mike Connor, Lizard Man, Stewart McKenzie, Adrian Roberts, Swirly Rat Jr.

Bitter Love *by DAN BITTER*

sex advice

Hey Breeder!
I'm a 24-year-old het male, and this is my first year at Burning Man. I came here at the advice of a friend, who told me that, during the festival, a lot of women walk around topless wearing blue body paint. My friend recommended Burning Man to me when I told him of my ultimate fantasy, which goes way back to my early childhood. This particular fantasy involves the Saturday morning cartoon character Smurfette, and for reasons of common decency I will spare you the sordid details.

My question is, how soon after meeting my azure amour should I confess my true intentions? What is the likelihood I will just be slapped and called a perverted freak? Is this normal?

— Papa Smurf

Hey P.S.:
Isn't Smurfette a minor, you perverted freak? But on to your question:

It's usually a good idea to establish trust in a relationship before divulging this sort of twisted fantasy to a partner, and trust takes time. However, here at Burning Man, we are not given the luxury of time. So I recommend the shortcut: alcohol. Get your blue babe good and drunk, and chances are she'll think the Smurf angle is pretty damn funny — at least I did, and I'm pretty hammered right now.

Hey Breeder!
I didn't bring any food to the desert (unless you count my Viagra prescription). Can I subsist on my own jism? Is this normal?

— Hard & Hungry

Hey H&H:
Drink your own jism? What are you, some kind of frickin' homo?

For this question I called up Dr. Eugene Viscous, author of *Semen, Nutrition, and You,* and the foremost expert on "cum-sumption" in America. According to Dr. Viscous, the average load of spunk contains 3 grams of protein and about 40 calories. (That's one "point," for Weight Watchers members.) As a human being, you automatically burn around 1600 calories a day without even trying. So in order to survive, you'd have to jack off at least 40 times a day. I don't know how well that Viagra works, but this would sure put it to the test, wouldn't it?

For a more practical alternative, you could always fill up on *other* people's jism. I'm sure there are plenty of guys out here looking for quick blowjobs. Why not be resourceful and turn your camp into White House Intern Theme Camp? Just be sure to get everyone's home phone number though. That way, if you contract some disease, you can start narrowing down who gave it to you.

Hey Breeder!
I'm a 19-year-old student at Wellesley College, and I came to Burning Man because I heard that it was a safe, tight-knit community. But when I got out here, I was surprised to learn that men are allowed to come. How can I feel free to be myself when there are men here?

— Thought It Was Safe

Hey TIWS:
This is Burning Man, not the Lilith Fair. Why don't you go play a fucking folk song or something?

Hey Breeder!
I was utterly appalled to read the advice you gave to "Burning For The Man" (*Piss Clear, #5,* 28 August 1997), in which you advised him to wait until after the Man burns and then have sex with the remains. Your flip and pithy suggestion reeked of necrophilia, which is not only illegal in all fifty states (including Nevada), but is also morally repugnant and truly contemptible. Encouraging your impressionable readers to have sex with anything that's dead is inexcusable. How dare you!

— Truly Sickened Old Lady

Hey TSOL:
Whatever, bitch.

Speaking of death, did anyone happen to see that one episode of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* that briefly mentioned Burning Man? Now I know for sure that that show is cool. Besides, Sarah Michelle Geller is so fucking hot, she makes the Black Rock Desert feel like an ice cold frozen margarita. Hmm... that actually sounds pretty good. I think I'll go have another.

Got a question for Dan Bitter?
Keep it to yourself, asshole

It's the wind, stupid

by LIZARD MAN

Every year I say it, and every year people ignore it, to frequently annoying and often tragic results. It's so simple it can be expressed in six words, but I guess people just can't believe it 'til they see it. On the playa, the wind is capricious, violent, and unpredictable. You can be sitting around for hours, in a still, motionless calm, when suddenly, whammo! 70-mile-an-hour wind gusts come blasting out of nowhere, throwing your lawn chairs up to 200 yards and throwing everything that isn't nailed down across the playa. Don't believe me? Ask the old-timers. Rule number two (number one is to piss clear!):

Never leave camp without battening down.

There, I've said it again. Heed my words. Because I'm tired of chasing other people's trash.

The face of Burning Man

by LIZARD MAN

Well actually, the Burning Man has no face, which is wonderfully abstract and strangely appropriate, given that the Burning Man Experience is all about face. Not saving or losing face, but about facing your own self. Burning Man is about facing your fears, confronting yourself head-on, and facing both your strengths and weaknesses in all their resplendent glory. Burning Man is not just about the good feelings, it is about dealing with the intensity of life in all its rich variety. Facing the often beautiful and sometimes ugly truths about human nature. Facing your own demons and accepting that you are not perfect. Facing your connections to others, however wonderful or flawed or deep or shallow they may be. Facing the stark reality of your own survival in this harsh playa environment, and coming out a winner... maybe with a little help from the community whose view of yourself you must also face.

At Burning Man, the stress, the heat, the intimacy, the power of the community, the powerful Black Rock desert environment, and even the freedom to shed your clothing, all act in concert to lay your soul bare before yourself and others—and this is what you must face.

Yes the Burning Man has no face. He's missing a few other things as well, and maybe you are too. As we burn the Man, you are free to imprint your own face on it/her/him. Maybe the expression on that face will tell you what you have learned about yourself here, without you even realizing it.

The Space Cowgirls' 10 steps to beauty and hygiene on the playa

1. Wake up and open up a refreshing drink.

2. Bat eyelashes. Scam a free solar shower from your neighbor.

3. With your feet clean (we recommend putting paper towels between your feet and thongs) proceed directly to the Camp Camp Village Quarter to get a complete manicure/pedicure from the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence.

4. Apply fake eyelashes in someone's air conditioned RV. This prevents them from sticking to your eyeballs.

5. Apply lipstick, then store it in a cooler to avoid melting.

6. By this time you've probably worked up a sweat becoming glamorous, but it's worth it, honey! Go ahead and ask your neighbor for a cool cocktail to make you feel better.

7. Make sure you have plenty of baby wipes on hand before you head out for the day—you don't want those pits to be stinking, and you especially don't want that gorgeous make-up to smear!

8. Wear a cowboy hat. It's an easy way out — it keeps the dust and dirt from making your hair nappy, while adding a stylish touch to any ensemble. (Ever wonder why Larry Harvey is always wearing one?)

beauty

9. If you don't feel somewhat better by this point, go ahead and slather yourself with glitter, or perhaps shimmering body powder — at least you'll look better!

10. After a long, very hot day of cavorting, frolicking, lolligagging, hit the local saloon for some hooch while soaking your feet in a bucket of peppermint lotion!

MISTRESS & MR. DUH
BY MAYA HAYUK & THE SPACE COWGIRLS
BRINGS GENERATOR JUST TO PLUG IN THE HAIR DRYER
USES SUN-IN
BRINGS BEER INSTEAD OF WATER
TAKES ENOUGH HALLUCINOGENS TO KILL A DEAD HEAD
WEARS TONS OF MAKE UP
FESTERING FRESHLY PIERCED NOSE
SLATHERS ON BABY OIL TO WORK THAT COPPERTONE LOOK
SLEEVELESS FRAT SHIRT
BUDWEISER UNIVERSITY
WEARS PASTIES
BUTT FLOSS
INFECTS OTHERS PRACTICING UNSAFE SEX
WORKED OUT EXTRA HARD TO IMPRESS B.M. BABES
ONE WORD: LATEX.
POCKETS FULL OF $ WITH NO SUPPLIES. ASKS "WHERE'S THE FALAFEL STAND?"
STARTS FIGHTS
CRACKS WHIP IN PEOPLES' EARS
SMELLS LIKE NAIR
DOG POOPS EVERYWHERE
POOPS EVERY WHERE
RIDES BICYCLE NAKED
TOSSES CANS & BUTTS
IS ALWAYS THINKING "PRACTICAL"
DUH
BUT GENERALLY DRIVES CAR REAL FAST AROUND THE PLAYA
BLASTS TECHNO ALL NIGHT

classifieds

RANGER RADIO DAILY AT 11 AM
Ranger Director Duane Hoover, also known as Big Bear, hosts a daily radio show on 99.5 FM everyday at 11 a.m. Big Bear sez that the show will include useful information about how to survive in Black Rock City, what's happening in town that day, etc. Big Bear also says that he will play a Corny Old Country Song (COCS) every day, and—for balance—a couple of Suave Urban Contemporary Songs (SUCS) as well. After all, don't good COCS deserve a couple of good SUCS on a more or less daily basis?

AGING HIPSTERS COCKTAIL PARTY, THURSDAY, 6 PM, BLEU LIGHT DISTRICT
Feeling too old for Burning Man? Are all your pals twenty years younger than you? Looking for a soulmate who's also an agemate? Then come to the Aging Hipsters Cocktail Party, Thursday at 6 p.m., in the Bleu Light District. Hostess LadyBee and host Jeff Holmes will present this wonderful experiment in radical exclusion!

Only those 40 and above will be admitted... and don't try to bluff your way in either! Our age-checkers will examine you at the door. Wear your evening clothes and bring: a personal drinking vessel, a bottle and/or snack, and your fabulous self. We want you! Children under 40 admitted if accompanied by parent.

GET SUPPLIES AT ANAL RETENTION CAMP
Anal Retention Camp will step into the void left by the departure of the Frontier Store. All you losers who didn't bring enough supplies, come on over. We have plenty of batteries and sunscreen! D cells: $8 apiece. AA cells: $12 apiece. SPF 8 sunscreen: $16 per bottle. SPF 25 sunscreen: $32 per bottle.

PENFOLD, THE POSTMAN OF THE PLAYA, WILL DELIVER YOUR MAIL
Penfold, Black Rock City's very own gruntled Postal Worker, returns to provide off-playa mail service. Bring your stamped and addressed postcards/letters/bill payments, and deposit them in the Playa Postbox conveniently located in the Bleu Light District. Or hope Penfold (or his fiancee) passes your camp on their Amazing PygmyBikes.

Mail will be affixed with a special commemorative stamp—hand-carved by Penfold himself. Passports and other miscellaneous items will also be gladly stamped. Don't have postage/envelopes/postcards? A limited number of each can be had from Penfold for a donation. All proceeds go to the Burning Man Project. Last pickup is at sunset on Sunday. Like last year, the commemorative stamp is destroyed in the Man's flames on Burn Night.

COME TO THE STARLUST LOUNGE IN CENTER CAMP
The "original" BYOB Alien Beach Bar returns to perform fertility rites, celestial breast painting, and goddess V-trims and coloring. Plus Lunar Limbo, Venus Erotica Contests, and Orbit Fashion Shows.

Frug the night away in an otherworldly atmosphere at the Intergalactic Disco Stomp. Grand re-opening is Thursday for the Locals Single Alien Landing site. On Friday, at twilight, join your host, Rick for "Cosmic Blanca." Saturday is the Nebulous Rear-Entry Party and Beach Bash.

The Starlust Lounge — "where everything is free because you bring it."

SEEKING GERMANS!
Cute punk rock opera singer wants to practice her German...and maybe more? Come to the *Piss Clear* camp in Disturbia, ask for Bubbles.

***PISS CLEAR* WANTS YOU!**
Piss Clear, Black Rock City's only alternative newspaper, is currently seeking writers, photographers, illustrators, and cartoonists for next year's editions. We're looking for people to assist in writing and compiling items for all the various columns and lists, in addition to writing features and rants. Photographs, illustrations, and comics needed as well. Contact Adrian Roberts at: pissclear@blueperiod.com. Phone: 415.626.7882. Snail-mail: *Piss Clear,* 1388 Haight Street, Suite 232, SF, CA 94117.

STARLUST LOUNGE IN CENTER CAMP SEEKS PEOPLE
- Intergalactic Waitress auditions
- Entertainment needed for Satellite Stage
- Chupa Cabras welcome
- No spectators or drum circles.

The Starlust Lounge — "where every night is amateur night."